

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15  
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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6563  
INFO PANCANAL  
USCINCSO

UNCLAS PANAMA 2559

DEPT FOR AR/PAF AND PAN

USCINCSO FOR J-2 AND PAO

PANCANAL FOR IO

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SOPN, PN  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION

1-PANAMA CITY.--PRO-GOP MATUTINO AND CRITICA CARRY FRONT PAGE  
PHOTOS APRIL 14 OF DEMONSTRATION BY SMALL GROUP OF STUDENTS  
AT EMBASSY AFTERNOON OF APRIL 13. MATUTINO ALSO CARRIES  
ACAN-EFE STORY, HEADED, "STUDENT PROTEST." BOTH TV STATIONS  
CARRIED SHORT ACCOUNTS OF GATHERING, AT WHICH PRESS AND  
NATIONAL GUARDSMEN OUTNUMBERED DEMONSTRATORS. CHANNEL 2'S  
COVERAGE INCLUDED FOOTAGE OF STUDENTS AND GUARDSMEN IN MINOR  
TUSSELE WHEN STUDENTS TRIED TO LOWER U.S. FLAG, BUT CHANNEL 4  
CARRIED ONLY PAINTING OF SIGNS AND CHANTING OF SLOGANS.

2-MATUTINO COLUMN MOYOLANDIA EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER STUDENT  
PROTESTS, WITH OPENING OF SCHOOLS APRIL 17. "IT IS A LOGICAL  
CONSEQUENCE," SAYS THE COLUMN, "THAT THE STUDENTS ON THEIR FIRST  
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DAY OF CLASSES ARE GOING TO ESTABLISH THEIR POSITION...IN A CLEAR,  
DEFINITE AND FIRM FORM...BUT IF IT IS INDEED IMPOSSIBLE THAT THEY  
SHOULD COMPORT THEMSELVES WITHOUT THE VEHEMENCE OF THEIR AGE, IT  
IS TO BE HOPED THAT BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MOMENT, THEY  
WILL PROCEED TO ESTABLISH THEIR POSITION WITH PRUDENCE, WITHOUT  
VIOLENCE AND WITH RESPONSIBILITY."

3-MOYOLANDIA CONTINUES, "IRRESPONSIBLE CONDUCT COULD WELL BE THE ANSWER...TO JUSTIFY REPRESSIVE CONDUCT LATER BY OUR NEIGHBORS, WHO ARE IN PERMANENT STATE OF ALERT IN ORDER TO 'MAINTAIN ORDER' AND PROTECT THE CANAL...AND THE DECONCINI WILL LEAP TO SHOUT TO THE FOUR WINDS THAT THEY WERE RIGHT, THAT THERE IS A DANGER OF PARALYZATION OF THE CANAL BY PANAMANIAN AND ONLY AN AMENDMENT LIKE THE ONE INTRODUCED CAN GUARANTEE FREE AND CONTINUED TRANSIT THROUGH THE CANAL. WE WILL BE PLAYING INTO THEIR HANDS. IT WOULD BE CHILDISH TO ASK THE STUDENTS NOT TO DECLARE THEMSELVES, BUT IT WOULD BE UNWISE FOR THEM TO DECLARE THEMSELVES IN SUCH A FORM THAT THE NOBILITY OF THE ACTION COULD BE TURNED AGAINST US."

4-U.S. PRESS REPORTS AND COMMENTARIES ON TREATY ISSUE AND DECONCINI CONTINUE TO RECEIVE HEAVY PLAY HERE. NEITHER TV NEWS-CAST CARRIED OWN COMMENTARY APRIL 13, BUT BOTH READ ENTIRE TEXT OF APRIL 13 WASHINGTON POST EDIT ON DECONCINI, AND TEXT ALSO APPEARS IN DIANA AROSEMENA DISPATCH FRONT-PAGED IN ALL SPANISH MORNINGERS. CHANNEL 4 COMMENTATOR ALSO READ ENTIRE TEXT OF GARRY WILLS COLUMN ON CITIZENSHIP OF THOSE BORN IN CANAL ZONE.

5-MATUTINO AND LA ESTRELLA BANNER FRONT PAGE WITH STATEMENT BY PANAMANIAN ARCHBISHOP MARCOS MCGRATH. STATEMENT IS MODERATE IN TONE, BUT SAYS DECONCINI RESERVATION "IGNORES SOVEREIGNTY, DIGNITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE," AND "NEW TREATIES ARE NOT VALUABLE FOR THE MONEY WHICH THEY INVOLVE, BUT FOR THE MUTUAL RESPECT AND UNCLASSIFIED

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HONOR BETWEEN NATIONS, UNEQUAL IN SIZE AND POWER, BUT EQUAL IN DIGNITY."

6-CRITICA FOR THIRD STRAIGHT DAY, DEVOTES EDIT COLUMN TO EXTENSIVE QUOTES FROM ANOTHER SOURCE, THIS TIME FROM U.S. CATHOLIC BISHOPS' STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF TREATIES, CONCLUDING THAT PANAMA OWES THANKS TO CHURCH, AND THAT TREATIES INCLUDING DECONCINI RESERVATION WOULD BE DEFEATED AT ANY NEW PLEBISCITE. MATUTINO EDIT ALSO DEVOTED TO THANKING CHURCH, BOTH IN U.S. AND PANAMA, FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

7-CRITICA COLUMNIST AND UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA LAW SCHOOL ASSISTANT DEAN CAMILO PEREZ TAKES "I TOLD YOU SO" ATTITUDE, AND BLAMES CURRENT RATIFICATION PROBLEM NOT ON DECONCINI, WHO HE AGREES IS "IRRESPONSIBLE," BUT ON PANAMANIAN BELIEF FORM BEGINNING IN "CONVINCING PROMISES OF WASHINGTON POLITICAL LEADERS, WHO ASSURED US CONSTANTLY THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEMS, THAT EVERYTHING WOULD GO WITHOUT MISHAP, THAT THE SENATE WOULD NOT OPPOSE THE TREATIES. BUT WHAT WAS NOT SAID WAS THAT A TREATY CAN BE AFFECTED AS WELL BY THE INTRODUCTION OF CONDITIONS WHICH ALTER ITS CONTENT AND GOALS."

8-PEREZ CONCLUDES THAT PANAMA'S BEST COURSE AT THIS POINT IS TO "STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF RETURNING THE AMENDMENTS AND RESERVATIONS, AS WELL AS THE SO-CALLED UNDERSTANDINGS, TO THE SENATE WITH CLEAR PANAMANIAN SIGNALS LOOKING OUT FOR OUR PRESENT AND FUTURE INTEGRITY. PRECEDENTS EXIST TO SUPPORT THIS. FOR EXAMPLE WHAT HAPPENED IN COLOMBIA, WHEN THEY RETURNED THE THOMPSON-URRUTIA TREATY WITH COUNTER-AMENDMENTS AND COUNTER-RESERVATIONS WHICH OBLIGED THE U.S. SENATE TO RECONSIDER IT. AND THE DIGNITY OF COLOMBIA WAS SALVAGED."

9-CARLOS BOLIVAR PEDRESCHI, WRITING IN MATUTINO, CRITICIZES TORRIJOS GOVERNMENT FOR USING MISTAKEN CRITERIA FOR JUDGING NEW TREATIES. PEDRESCHI CLAIMS CRITERION SHOULD NOT BE WHETHER TREATIES ARE BETTER THAN 1903 TREATIES, BUT WHETHER THEY ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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GOOD IN THEMSELVES FOR PANAMA. "PANAMA NEEDS CRITERIA OF EVALUATION WHICH RESPOND TO THE TRUE NATIONAL INTERESTS AND NOT CRITERIA WHICH IN FACT FINISH BY LENDING USEFUL SERVICES TO THOSE WHO DO NOT NEED THEM,SUCH AS U.S. COLONIALISM."

10-KEY, PREDESCHI CONCLUDES, TO A GOVERNMENT'S VALUE IS "NOT WHAT A GOVERNMENT SAYS, BUT WHAT IT DOES. BEING FAITHFUL TO OUR OWN NATIONALISTIC CRITERIA OF EVALUATION, THE AMENDMENTS AND RESERVATIONS, BECAUSE OF THEIR CLEAR COLONIALIST CONTENT, MERIT OUR MOST DECISIVE DISAPPROVAL AND WE PATRIOTICALLY INVITE THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO REJECT THEM AS WELL." JORDEN

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## Message Attributes

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